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FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE (QUARTER)

March 2010

Release Date

9 March 2010

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the December 2009 issue of Tasmanian Statistical News.

This issue features a new hot topics section, focusing on bushfire awareness and population statistics. It also provides a potted history of the Census in the lead up to the 2011 Census of Population and Housing, which will mark the centenary of the Census in Australia. The

spotlight this issue is on health.

What does the typical Tasmanian look like? What are their characteristics? Find out in our feature article: 'In search of the typical Tasmanian'.

Also discussed in this issue are aspects of statistical literacy, with a continued focus on data awareness.

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative, and we welcome your feedback and comments.

INQUIRIES

For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

What's New



WHAT'S NEW

From the Regional Director's desk...

News from the Environment and Agriculture Business Statistics Centre

2011 - Centenary year of the Housing and Population Census

ABS to host GIS Workshop

New edition of Australian Social Trends

Hot Topics

Spotlight on Health

Upcoming training and events

FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S DESK...

Senator the Hon. Nick Sherry recently visited the Tasmanian ABS Office. In his ministerial capacity, Senator Sherry assists with the development, implementation and administration of policies within the Treasurer's portfolio. This includes the Treasurer's responsibility for the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Included in Senator Sherry's visit itinerary was: a briefing meeting with the Regional ABS Director and executive staff; a presentation of spatial data outputs from the Agricultural Census; and a demonstration of assistance provided by the ABS to the State of Tasmania through the State and Territory Statistical Services Program.

ABS officer Louise Hawker attended the 3rd OECD World Forum on 'Statistics, Knowledge and Policy', held in Busan, Korea from 27-30 October 2009. Prior to her attendance at the

World Forum, Louise had been coordinating statistical support for the Office of the Tasmanian Social Inclusion Commissioner.

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NEWS FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE BUSINESS STATISTICS CENTRE

The Environment and Agriculture Business Statistics Centre (BSC) in Hobart is busy processing data from the Agricultural Survey 2009, with the aim of releasing final estimates earlier than ever before, in April 2010.

Vineyards Estimates, Australia (ABS cat. no. 1329.0.55.002) was released in October 2009 with small area production and area data available with the publication for the first time.

The monthly grain publications of Stocks of Grain Held by Bulk Grain Handling Companies and Grain Traders, Australia (ABS cat. no. 7122.0.55.001) and Wheat Use and Stocks, Australia (ABS cat. no. 7307.0) contained additional data for barley and selected other grains and pulses relating to the September 2009 quarter. These additional data will be attached to these releases quarterly over the next year.

The monthly livestock publication, Livestock and Meat, Australia (ABS cat. no. 7218.0.55.001) now has state/territory time series data available for the major commodities, and the September quarter 2009 release of Livestock and Meat, Australia (ABS cat. no. 7215.0) was released on the ABS website.

Since our last update, the BSC has nearly signed-off on the data collected from the benchmark Land Management Practices Survey of land owners in the Great Barrier Reef catchments. These data will be released in **Land Management Practices in the Great Barrier Reef Catchment, 2008-09** (ABS cat. no. 4619.0), on 22 December 2009.

The BSC is currently reviewing the format of its publications and how it can ensure that data users of all abilities are able to access and understand environmental and agricultural data. To make contributions to this review process, phone (03) 6222 5846 or email agriculture.statistics@abs.gov.au.

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2011 - CENTENARY YEAR OF THE HOUSING AND POPULATION CENSUS

The next Census of Population and Housing will take place on 7 August 2011. This will mark one hundred years since the first census was conducted by the Commonwealth of Australia on the night of 2 April 1911. The 1911 Census Form contained fourteen questions related to each individual and a further seven questions related to the individual's dwellings. Many of the questions from the 1911 Census Form - such as age, marital status and religion - are still asked today.

Further Censuses were held in 1921 and 1933, but the scheduled Census for 1941 was postponed due to Australia's involvement in the Second World War. The first post-war Census was taken in 1947 after an interval of 14 years. It played an important role in redirecting Australia's attention in the aftermath of the war. Previous censuses had concentrated on basic aspects such as materials used in building houses. However, with advances in technology, Census questions began to focus on the facilities contained within a house such as whether houses were supplied with gas, electricity and water as well as toilet, washing and cooking facilities.

Since the 1961 Census, Australia has taken a Census every five years. Following the 1967 Referendum, the 1971 Census saw the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the count, and their inclusion in the official population estimates for the first time.

The 2001 Census Form included questions about people's use of computers, their ancestry and whether they wished to participate in the Centenary of Federation Time Capsule project to commemorate one hundred years of Federation.

Preparations for the 2011 Census began even before the 2006 Census was conducted. Officers from the ABS in Tasmania have been busy meeting with state and local government, gathering local intelligence and sharing ideas for addressing challenges in field collection. The mammoth task of designing Census collector workloads around the state has also begun. In order to design roughly equal workloads which takes account of population shifts since the 2006 Census, contact with various government agency planning areas, real estate companies, property developers and other holders of information to discuss impacts on dwelling counts is progressively occurring.

For further information contact tasmania.statistics@abs.gov.au or check out our [2011 Census of Population and Housing Local & Regional Engagement Strategy brochure](#) (ABS cat. no. 2911.0.55.001).

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ABS TO HOST GIS WORKSHOP

Place-based statistical data is playing an increasingly important role in policy-making decisions.

One of the recent initiatives that the Tasmanian Regional Office of the ABS has undertaken to ensure that it is actively involved at all levels in this space, is to organise an all-day Geographic Information Systems (GIS) forum to be held at the ABS on December 16, 2009.

The major focus of this forum will be on sharing learnings on the GIS front, including the successful use of maps in areas of interest, and projects currently underway. This is an opportunity to share the tips and traps of GIS as well as helping cross-pollination across agency projects.

The keynote presentation will be by Greg Pole from Queensland who will be sharing his experiences of the Community Services Information System (COMSIS) which was developed by the Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR), as part of the Department of Communities' commitment to the Queensland Compact. COMSIS provides a single comprehensive source of local, regional and state-wide data for over 200 data-sets, including data on demography, education, employment, family, housing, income, remoteness and disadvantage.

It will also include presentations by the Department of Infrastructure and Energy Resources on the State Infrastructure Planning System (SIPS) and by the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment on the Land and Information Systems Tasmania (LIST).

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NEW EDITION OF AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL TRENDS

The ABS released the latest edition of [Australian Social Trends](#) (ABS cat. no. 4102.0) on 10 December 2009. The publication draws together a wide range of statistics from the ABS and

other official sources to provide a picture of Australian society and how it is changing over time.

The latest edition features six articles:

- Patterns in work
- Living alone
- Jobless families
- Smoking, risky drinking and obesity
- Preschool attendance
- International comparisons

The release also includes indicator spreadsheets presenting national and state summary data on housing and family and community as well as summary data comparing Australia with a number of other countries on a range of population, health, education and labour indicators.

The publication shows that:

- Tasmanians are more likely to live in separate houses than in apartments or townhouses compared to people in other states and territories. In 2007-08, 90% of private dwellings in Tasmania were separate houses, compared with 78% nationally. Tasmania also had the lowest rate of private renting in Australia (17% in 2007-08 compared with a national average of 24%).
- The average loan for first home buyers in Tasmania more than doubled from \$86,000 to \$191,400 in the decade to 2009. However, the average first home loan in Tasmania in 2009 was still the lowest of all states and territories and well below the national average of \$269,000.
- Children in Tasmania were more likely than those in the rest of the country to be living in single-parent families. In 2008, 22.5% of Tasmanian children aged under 15 years were living in single parent families, compared with a national average of 18.2%. The proportion in Tasmania has increased slightly over the past ten years (up from 19.3% in 1998) in contrast to the national rate which has slightly declined (down from 19.5% in 1998).
- The proportion of couple families in Tasmania with children aged under 15 years in which neither parent was employed has halved in the decade to 2008 (from 12.1% to 6.1%), reflecting a nationwide trend.
- In 2008, the fertility rate in Tasmania was 2.2, this rate was similar to the Northern Territory rate and slightly higher than those of Queensland and Western Australia.

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HOT TOPICS

Bushfire Awareness: are you prepared to survive the bushfire season?

South-eastern Australia, including Tasmania, is one of the most vulnerable bushfire areas in the world. Experts have warned that the bushfire threat and fuel load this summer are similar to those experienced prior to the devastating 1967 bushfires in southern Tasmania. Those fires: claimed 62 lives; injured 900; left 7,000 people homeless and destroyed 1,293 homes.

Further information about the 1967 bushfires in southern Tasmania is available on the Emergency Management Australia Disasters Database: <http://www.ema.gov.au/ema/emaDisasters.nsf>

In 2008-09, a total of 1,899 bushfires were reported in Tasmania. Bushfires accounted for 44% of the fires attended by the Tasmania Fire Service, while the Parks and Wildlife Service or Forestry Tasmania were the sole respondent to 48 bushfire incidents. Three days of Total Fire Ban were declared in Tasmania, and 25 days of fire weather warnings were issued by the Bureau of Meteorology.

The Tasmania Fire Service, the Parks and Wildlife Service, and Forestry Tasmania work cooperatively and share resources to protect lives, property and the environment in our state. In 2008-09 the Tasmania Fire Service provided 233 brigades throughout Tasmania, with 5,370 volunteers and career staff.

The National Bushfire Warnings Taskforce, established following the Victorian bushfires of February 2009, has developed a new fire danger ratings (FDR) system for bushfires, with recommended actions you should take in the event of a bushfire:

FDR	RECOMMENDED ACTION IF BUSHFIRE THREATENS	
Catastrophic	100+	Leaving is the ONLY safe option for your survival - regardless of any plan to stay and defend.
Extreme	75-99	Leaving is the safest option for your survival.
Severe	50-74	Leaving is the safest option for your survival. Only stay if your home is well prepared and you can actively defend it.
Very High	25-49	Only stay if your home is well prepared and you can actively defend it.
High	12-24	Know where to get more information and monitor the situation for any changes.
Low-moderate	0-11	Know where to get more information and monitor the situation for any changes.

During the bushfire season, fire danger ratings forecast for Tasmania will be available on the Bureau of Meteorology website, the Tasmania Fire Service website and on the weather page of Tasmania's daily newspapers.

Further information is available on the Tasmania Fire Service website:
<http://www.fire.tas.gov.au>

Population counts for Tasmania

In December 2008, Tasmania celebrated as the population reached the significant milestone of 500,000 people. The symbolic half-millionth person was drawn from a box containing entries from 108 newborns and 72 migrants who arrived in Tasmania between 8-18 December 2008. But why could we simply not identify the lucky person on the spot? Why was it so difficult to pinpoint the exact 500,000th Tasmanian on a precise day?

To explain this, we must first examine how the population is counted. There are different types of population counts: Estimated Resident Population (ERP) and Census counts.

The Estimated Resident Population is Australia's official population measure. As its name suggests, the Estimated Resident Population is an estimate. This estimate is based on the five yearly Population and Housing Census counts of usual residents that are then adjusted to account for usual residents missed in the Census, including residents estimated to have

been temporarily overseas on Census night. Further adjustments are made for births, deaths and net migration in the period from the date of the estimate to Census Night.

The Estimated Resident Population is updated quarterly between censuses using data from birth and death registrations, overseas arrivals and departures, and estimates of interstate migration. These quarterly estimates are revised each time a population census is conducted.

While the Estimated Resident Population is the most accurate count of the population, it does not allow individuals to be identified. The Australian Bureau of Statistics prides itself on the confidentiality of its data, so any attempt to identify the exact 500,000th individual was always going to be a highly improbable mission. We could narrow down the likely time period in which the 500,000 Tasmanian might arrive (8-18 December 2008), but it was up to the effects of randomisation to decide the lucky winner of the title, that is drawing the name of Tasmania's half-millionth person out of a box!

Further information is available in [Australian Demographic Statistics](#) (ABS cat. no. 3101.0). This is the authoritative and most up to date source for all things related to Estimated Resident Population for states and territories. According to the latest Tasmanian population estimates for June 2009, our population has continued to grow, with a total of 502,627 persons now resident in Tasmania: 254,685 (50.7%) females and 247,942 (49.3%) males. The total population grew by 5,100 (1.0%) between June 2008 and June 2009. Natural increase was the major component of growth for the year ended 30 June 2009, representing 0.5%, with net interstate migration accounting for 0.1% and net overseas migration 0.4%.

Tasmania's total fertility rate at highest level since 1974

In 2008, 6,775 births were registered in Tasmania. This was an increase of 1.7% from 2007.

Tasmania's total fertility rate increased from 1.81 babies per woman in 2000 to 2.24 babies per woman in 2008. This is the highest rate recorded since 1974!

It is also noteworthy that the change from 1.81 to 2.24 crosses the somewhat magical 2.1 threshold which is the replacement level.

Across all states and territories, Tasmania had one of the lowest median ages for parents - second only to the Northern Territory.

The median age of mothers in Tasmania was 29.2 years, and 31.9 years for fathers, compared to the median age of Australian mothers of 30.7 years and 33.1 years for fathers.

Approximately 50% of all births in Tasmania were to women not in a registered marriage. This is the second highest of all states and territories, with the Northern Territory being the highest at approximately 63%.

Further information is available in [Births, Australia, 2008](#) (ABS cat. no. 3301.0).

More Tasmanians with Certificate III plus qualifications

Based on the May 2009 Survey of Education and Work, an estimated 43.8% of Tasmanians aged 15-64 years have qualifications at the Certificate III level or higher.

This compares with the estimate of 33.4% from the 2001 Survey of Education and Work.

In May 2009, an estimated 61,500 Tasmanians aged 15-64 years were enrolled in a course of study.

Of these an estimated 19,800 were attending a higher education institution, 18,800 were at school, 14,300 at a Technical and Further Education college, and 8,600 were at other educational institutions.

Further information is available in [Education and Work, Australia, May 2009](#) (ABS cat. no. 6227.0).

Toyota tops on the Tasmanian Motor Vehicle Register

There were 400,516 motor vehicles, including motor cycles, on the Tasmanian Motor Vehicle register at 31 March 2009.

Of these, 21.2% were manufactured by Toyota, 14.0% by Holden and 12.9% by Ford.

Of all registered vehicles, 71.4% were passenger vehicles and 20.4% were light commercial vehicles.

The fleet includes 85,845 vehicles manufactured before 1991.

Further information is available in [Motor Vehicle Census, Australia, 31 Mar 2009](#) (ABS cat. no. 9309.0).

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SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTH

Obesity on the rise in Tasmania

The Tasmania Together Progress Board recently updated its Online Benchmark Reports (OBR) on Tasmanians who are overweight or obese. The update was sourced from unpublished estimates from the 2007-08 National Health Survey (NHS) and is the third progress measurement in the benchmark series beginning with estimates from the 2001 NHS. The new information confirms a trend that shows an increase in the proportion of Tasmanians reporting a body mass index (BMI) in the obese range. The estimate from the 2001 NHS was that 16.4% of adult Tasmanians had reported a BMI in the obese range. By the time of the 2004-05 NHS this estimate had risen to 19.4%. The latest estimate, from the 2007-08 NHS, is 22.5%. For more information on the OBR reports visit <http://www.tasmaniatogether.tas.gov.au/obr#>. The forthcoming issue (due for release 29 January 2010) of [Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators](#) (ABS cat. no. 1307.6) will contain a special article on the NHS BMI estimates including estimates of measured BMI.

How active are our Children?

An estimated 61.0% of Tasmanian children aged 5-14 years participated in organised sports and/or dancing outside of school hours during the twelve months prior to interview in April

2009, compared with 68.7% nationally.

This was the lowest participation rate of all states and territories.

The most popular organised sports in Tasmania were outdoor soccer (19.1%), swimming (14.6%) and Australian Rules football (10.0%). Dancing attracted 8.6% of children in this age group.

The most popular recreational activities were watching TV, DVDs or videos (98.1%), spending time on any screen-based activities apart from watching TV, DVDs or videos (82.9%) and reading for pleasure (77.2%). More active recreational pursuits, such as bike riding, attracted more than two thirds (68.6%) of children aged 5-14 years, while skateboarding, rollerblading or riding a scooter had a participation rate of 40.9%.

Further information is available in [Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia](#) (ABS cat. no. 4901.0).

Diabetes: the modern epidemic

Saturday 14 November 2009 marked World Diabetes Day. Diabetes is recognised as one of the fastest growing chronic disease in Australia. According to the 2001 National Health Survey (NHS) an estimated 554,200 Australians had diabetes mellitus. By the time of the 2007-08 NHS the estimate of Australians with this condition had jumped to 818,200, an increase of 48%.

According to the 2007-08 NHS, 3.8% of the Tasmanian population suffered from diabetes mellitus. The prevalence of diabetes in the Tasmanian population was greater among older people and males: an estimated 81% of diabetes sufferers in Tasmania were aged 55 years or more, while males account for an estimated 57% of all people with the disease.

Diabetes Australia identifies diabetes as a major cause of premature death and chronic disability, but it can be prevented or delayed by maintaining a healthy weight and lifestyle. Key risk factors in developing type 2 diabetes include being overweight or obese, poor diet and inactivity. It is of critical concern that 2007-08 National Health Survey estimates showed high proportions of Tasmanians aged 18 years and over who fall into these high risk categories:

- 63.9% were measured as overweight or obese;
- 72.7% engaged in sedentary/low level exercise; and
- 88.8% consumed inadequate amounts of fruit or vegetables.

To reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes, Diabetes Australia recommends adopting a healthy diet and increasing physical activity.

Further information is available in the [National Health Survey: Summary of Results; State Tables 2007-08](#) (ABS cat. no. 4362.0) or visit the Diabetes Australia website: <http://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/>.

What's on your mind?

October was Anxiety and Depression Awareness Month, focusing attention on mental health issues, with the aim of raising awareness and helping to reduce stigma associated with

these conditions. Mental illness is wide ranging and affects many people in our society, be they sufferers, carers, colleagues, family or friends. It includes conditions such as depression, postnatal depression, anxiety disorder, psychosis, schizophrenia, eating disorders, and bipolar mood disorder. So let's look at how Tasmanians are coping with the increasing pressures of modern day living.

Of people aged 18 years and over in Tasmania in 2007-08, an estimated 11.0% reported high or very high levels of current psychological distress. More females (12.4%) than males (9.5%) reported this level of distress, with the highest rate among young females, aged 18-24 (22.2% with high or very high levels of distress). Middle-age peaks were evident among both females and males, with 14.7% of females and 12.6% of males aged 45-54 years and 14.0% of females and 12.3% of males aged 55-64 years reporting high or very high levels of distress.

Of persons with a mental health condition, an estimated 41.5% had used medications for their mental health condition, 33.9% had taken days away from work, school or study, while 26.9% had consulted an "other" health professional.

Further information is available in the [National Health Survey: Summary of Results; State Tables 2007-08](#) (ABS cat. no. 4362.0) or visit the beyondblue website: <http://www.beyondblue.org.au/index.aspx?>

Death rate remains steady in Tasmania

There were 4,219 deaths registered in Tasmania in 2008, approximately 87 (2%) more than the number registered in 2007 (4,132).

The standardised death rate (SDR) has remained at 6.9 deaths per 1,000 standard population in 2008, the same as the rate in 2007.

The infant mortality rate in Tasmania in 2008 was 3.8 deaths for every 1,000 live births.

The median age of registered deaths for males in Tasmania in 2008 was 78.1 years, up by three years on the 1998 median of 75.0 years.

A similar outcome for females has seen the median age of death rise from 80.9 years of age in 1998 to 83.3 years of age in 2008.

Further information is available in [Deaths, Australia, 2008](#) (ABS cat. no. 3302.0).

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UPCOMING TRAINING AND EVENTS



The Australian Bureau of Statistics will be hosting another NatStats Conference at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour on 15 - 17 September 2010.

NatStats 2010 will build on the enthusiasm and passion generated by delegates at NatStats08 and aims to build stronger links with key stakeholders, strengthen the

understanding of statistical issues within and across governments, and consolidate support for current and emerging statistical initiatives.

An exciting program is being developed and will address a range of issues regarding national statistics. If you would like to hear more about NatStats 2010 Conference, or have any suggestions, please email natstats@nss.gov.au.

Turning Data into Information

Overview: Develops skills in interpreting and analysing data and communicating information clearly and effectively. Analytical thinking enables data to be transformed into meaningful information. Relevant messages are extracted to meet objectives. Understanding the issue, analysis tools and techniques, clearly presenting conclusions.

Format: 2 day workshop

Who should attend: People working with data who wish to extract relevant information and communicate that information to a variety of audiences, e.g. through written reports.

Course Outcomes: Understanding how the collection and compilation of data affect its usefulness, quality and relevance. Ability to draw conclusions from the analysis, to communicate results effectively, and to present tables and graphs. Recognise possible pitfalls in analysis.

Cost: \$750 (inc. GST) per person

Date: Early 2010

Venue: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 200 Collins Street, Hobart

If you wish to enrol or want more information please email: tasmania.statistics@abs.gov.au.

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Feature Article



FEATURE ARTICLE

IN SEARCH OF THE TYPICAL TASMANIAN

In the weekly meeting my boss read out the latest State Accounts figures to a glazed-eyed audience. Quickly assessing the not-quite-awake mood of the room, he seized on my vulnerability. "Jane", he beamed at me with his wicked-but-benevolent-uncle smile, "what do you think these numbers will mean to the typical Tasmanian?"

"Not a lot," I replied. But unwilling to seem unenthusiastic, I followed it up with another question. "Who is the typical Tasmanian?"

"What a great idea, Jane! Find out who is the typical Tasmanian," he smirked.

It was too late, I realised I had just walked into a hole of my own digging.

So I huffed off to my coffee cup cluttered cubicle, and drummed desperate fingers on my keyboard. Where the heck do I start?

"There is no such thing as a typical Tasmanian. We're all different," I muttered to myself.

However, I soldiered on, and thought what better place to start than with the ABS?

Knowing that most of their statistics are available for free from their website www.abs.gov.au, I thought I'd withhold my cynicism for just a moment, and see what I could find.

The first thing I wanted to do was to give my average person a name, but what gender? Was my average Joe likely to be a Joe or a Jo? Using the Google search bar, I went straight to the latest Australian Demographic Statistics (ABS cat. no. 3101.0) for June 2009 and found that Tassie had 247,942 males and 254,685 females. So I was most likely looking for a Josephine, or Jo, for short.

Knowing that the ABS Population and Housing Census was the biggest and most detailed source of information on Australia's people and dwellings, I clicked straight into the Census theme page. A Basic Community Profile is a great collection of tables that can tell you heaps about any area in Australia. Downloading a Profile for Tasmania into Excel was the work of a few seconds and a couple of mouse clicks. It informed me that the median age of Tasmanians in 2006 was 39 years, so Jo was going to be well into the prime of her life. The Profile also showed that most of women in this age group (35-44 years) were married, living in a couple family, and most of them had two kids at that age, so that was confirmed.

So I knew that Jo was a married woman, living with a partner of some kind and a couple of kids. What did she do with herself? Did she work, was she a doctor or a hairdresser or a motor mechanic? To continue my research, I turned to the Labour Force, Australia publication (ABS cat. no. 6202.0). The latest monthly trend figures (October 2009) showed that 55.2% of Tasmania's women aged 15 years and over were either employed or looking for work. So Jo was in the labour force. Naturally not all women in that age group in Tassie work full-time. The same table showed me that only 48.7% worked full-time. I couldn't find out from the Labour Force publication how many hours she worked, but by using the new Statistics filter on the website I did find out, and unearthed a gem! I discovered a publication which brings together heaps of statistics from all across the ABS, all about Tasmania.

In this publication, Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators (ABS cat no 1307.6), under the Labour heading, I found out that the average part-time worker in Tasmania works 15.1 hours per week. So that left my unknown Jo with plenty of time to keep up with running the household, playing tennis (or maybe bowls) and having coffee with her girlfriends. Was that the reality?

A quick glance at the Census Community Profile again indicated that most employed women of the 35-44 year age group (5,811) were clerical and administrative workers, although another 5,172 were professionals. I guess that fits - office work would easily enable someone to work part-time, earn a bit of income to support the family budget, and still have time for other things.

Oh, wait a minute, I forgot. I didn't look at part-time workers, only employed women, so maybe most of those professionals were full-time. I rang the National Information Referral Service (ph: 1300 135 070), and was told that if I wanted to pay for a customised table, I could find out exactly how many of these 35-44 year old women professionals were full-time

or part-time, and precisely what their occupations were as well, but I graciously declined. I was having too much fun finding out what I could for free from the website first.

Making the assumption that my target was working part-time in a clerical type office job, for around 15 hours per week, I wondered what other things occupied her time?

Going back to the Census again, Table 19 of the Community Profile informed me that the largest group of women in our age group (9,740) took on somewhere between 5 and 14 hours a week of unpaid domestic work. And another 9,463 of them did a whopping 30 hours or more of it!

In fact, I mused over a hot keyboard, life in Tassie didn't look too bad. 71% of homes in Tassie were fully owned or being purchased, with median mortgage repayments checking in at \$867 per week. I could afford to live here, I thought, on my meagre pay. And go kayaking or bushwalking on weekends. That's if I kept my job...

Taking a look at the notes I had written without thinking, I had to laugh. With the help of the ABS, finding the typical Tasmanian was easy! I would tell my boss that the typical Tasmanian Jo, is female, 39 years old, married with two kids (presumably sending her mad), working part-time, doing a dozen or so hours of voluntary work each week, and was steadily paying off her mortgage.

Actually, that was such fun, I might offer to write another article one day...

Sources:

[Australian Demographic Statistics](#) (ABS cat. no. 3101.0)

[Labour Force, Australia](#) (ABS cat. no. 6202.0)

[Population by Age and Sex](#) (ABS cat. no. 3235.0)

[Regional Population Growth](#) (ABS cat. no. 3218.0)

[Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators](#) (ABS cat. no. 1307.6)

[2006 Census Basic Community Profile](#)

How Can We Help



HOW CAN WE HELP

General statistical inquiries

Statistical training

Statistical literacy

GENERAL STATISTICAL INQUIRIES

We can help you to make a more informed decision...

Our consultants are available to discuss your information needs, and assist you to obtain the data which will best meet your requirements.

A range of published data is available free of charge on our website and more detailed data can be tailored to your requirements as part of our priced information consultancy service. Contact our consultants who will discuss your needs in detail and provide you with an obligation free quote.

Phone: 1300 135 070 (between 9.00am-5.00pm EST)

Email: client.services@abs.gov.au

Fax: 1300 135 211

Post: Client Services, ABS, GPO Box 796, Sydney, 2001

Online Inquiry Form

To find out more about how we can customise data tailored to meet your needs check out our Information Consultancy Services brochure online.

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STATISTICAL TRAINING

Our training programs are conducted by ABS staff with expertise in designing questionnaires, analysing data and managing the survey process. The courses teach practical skills by involving participants in individual and group exercises. In addition, courses can be tailored to meet the specific needs of your organisation. We also hold regular seminars which may focus on statistical developments, publications, trends or issues.

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STATISTICAL LITERACY

Understanding Statistics

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has recently released the suite of 'Understanding Statistics' webpages on the ABS website. These webpages are available on the ABS home page, on the left hand navigation bar under Statistics. They provide a centralised portal on the ABS website where all information and resources (both existing and to be developed) that has a statistical literacy focus can be housed. There are some excellent resources contained within these pages, some are very basic, whilst others go in to more depth. There are quizzes, video tutorials and online presentations. A great resource for anyone wanting to know more about statistics and the ABS website.

Data Awareness

In today's information-rich society, we encounter statistical information on a daily basis, ranging from unemployment rates, retail figures and cancer rates, to football ladders and cricket scores. Statistics tell interesting stories and enable us to make sense of the world. Statistics are essential for research, planning and decision-making purposes.

There are several concepts that recur throughout the literature on statistical literacy. These fall into four key areas and can be considered in a practical manner as 'criteria' on which to base statistical literacy:

- Data awareness
- The ability to understand statistical concepts
- The ability to analyse, interpret and evaluate statistical information
- The ability to communicate statistical information and understandings

In this issue, we will focus on aspects of data awareness. Part of data awareness is to understand that data can be collected in different ways, each with respective advantages and disadvantages. There are three main forms of data collection:

Self-enumeration

The Census is an example of self-enumeration.

- Advantages: People fill in their own forms and can complete them in their own time.
- Disadvantages: This collection method may place limitations on the number and complexity of questions that can be asked.

Interview based surveys

An interviewer contacts the selected survey participant either in person or via telephone.

- Advantages: This collection method generally results in high response rates. More questions and more complex questions can be asked.
- Disadvantages: Introduces the risk of interviewer bias.

Administrative by-product

Data are available through administrative records generated from the administrative transactions carried out by government departments, agencies and businesses, such as birth and death statistics, and overseas arrivals and departures.

- Advantages: Making use of this type of data helps to keep the number of surveys and censuses to a minimum, which in turn is more cost effective.
- Disadvantages: The information has been collected for a specific purpose and is often restricted to a set of items which are administratively determined. Comparability problems may arise when comparing data from different sources.

In upcoming issues of Tasmanian Statistical News we will discuss other statistical literacy concepts in more detail. Meanwhile, if you would like to know more about statistical literacy and its relevance to you, check out the article: **What is statistical literacy and why is it important to be statistically literate?** as featured in [Tasmanian State and Regional](#)

Recent Releases



RECENT RELEASES

SELECTED RECENT RELEASES

26/11/2009 [Corrective Services, Australia, Sep 2009](#) (ABS cat. no. 4512.0)

Contains national information on persons in custodial corrective services in Australia. Quarterly information is presented for each state and territory. Statistics are presented by open and secure custody and periodic detention, for all prisoners and for Indigenous prisoners. Information is also presented on prisoner numbers by legal status (sentenced or unsentenced), and by sentence type. The number of sentenced receptions, the number of federal prisoners in each state and territory, information on numbers received into custody, and number of persons serving community-based corrective service orders are also included.

20/11/2009 [Housing Mobility and Conditions, 2007-08](#) (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.002)

First issue. This publication presents data from the Survey of Income and Housing (SIH) on Australian housing mobility and dwelling conditions. These data were collected in the 2007-08 SIH, in addition to the housing occupancy and costs information regularly collected in every SIH cycle and released in [Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia](#) (ABS cat. no. 4130.0). The ABS will collect information on additional housing topics in the SIH every six years. The topics selected for inclusion in the 2007-08 SIH were determined through extensive consultation with major users of housing statistics. A similar process is expected to be followed for the 2013-14 SIH, which will next include additional housing topics. The selected housing topics include length of time in dwelling, number of times moved in last five years, reasons for moving, and characteristics of the previous dwelling occupied. They include aspects of the dwelling occupied, such as any major structural problems, repairs and maintenance carried out in the past 12 months, and sources of energy and water. For first home buyers, data on home deposits paid and any monetary assistance received for the purchase are provided.

10/11/2009 [Principal Agricultural Commodities, Australia, Preliminary, 2008-09](#) (ABS cat. no. 7111.0)

Preliminary estimates of principal agricultural commodities and livestock numbers for the season, and comparative data for the previous year. Includes additional data for on-farm wheat use and storage.

05/11/2009 [Information Paper: Changes to Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, Aug 2009](#) (ABS cat. no. 6302.0.55.002)

This information paper summarises changes that will be introduced to the [Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, August 2009](#) issue of the publication. The paper advises the timing of the proposed changes, the reasons behind the changes and provides access to a mock up

of the proposed publication and the time series spreadsheets that will be available from the ABS website.

29/10/2009 Australian Bureau of Statistics Annual Report 2008-09 (ABS cat. no. 1001.0)

Reports on the operations of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

29/10/2009 Australian Statistics Advisory Council Annual Report 2008-09 (ABS cat. no. 1002.0)

Outlines the functions and activities of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council.

28/10/2009 Information Paper: Implementation of new international statistical standards in ABS National and International Accounts, Sep 2009

(ABS cat. no. 5310.0.55.002)

First issue. The international statistical standards for compilation of the National and International Accounts have been recently revised. The revised statistical standards are the System of National Accounts 2008 and the Sixth edition of the Balance of Payments Manual. This information paper describes the key changes from these standards, and describes the impact on selected key aggregates from the Australian System of National Accounts and the Balance of Payments and International Investment Position. The paper also includes a description of issues which the ABS will either not comply with or will not be implementing in order to portray an accurate picture of the Australian economy. A range of new or revised models used in compilation of the National and International Accounts are discussed in detail.

19/10/2009 Information paper: Product changes to Financial Accounts following revisions to international standards, 2009

(ABS cat. no. 5232.0.55.003)

First issue. Describes the products changes (tables in the pdf file and time series spreadsheets) being introduced to the September quarter 2009 issue of 'Financial Accounts' (ABS cat. no. 5232.0) to be released on Thursday 24 December 2009. These changes are the result of implementing revisions to statistical standards, in particular the System of National Accounts 2008 (SNA08), the Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual (BPM6), and the Standard Economic Sector Classifications of Australia 2008. It provides mock-ups of the proposed publication (pdf file) and related time series spreadsheets that will be available from the ABS website.

08/10/2009 Tourist Accommodation, Small Area Data, Tasmania, Jun 2009 (ABS cat. no. 8635.6.55.001)

Contains the results from the on-going quarterly Survey of Tourist Accommodation. Data provide information on the supply of, and demand for, tourist accommodation facilities. Data include number of establishments, capacity and employment for the quarter and occupancy and takings from accommodation for each month; by type of establishment and by star grading.

07/10/2009 Housing Finance, Australia, Aug 2009 (ABS cat. no. 5609.0)

Contains time series data for secured and unsecured housing finance commitments for owner occupation, commitments for construction or purchase of dwellings for rent or resale, and loan outstandings to individuals/households for housing. For secured housing finance for owner occupation, this publication presents the number and value of commitments made

by banks, permanent building societies, wholesale lenders n.e.c. and other lenders, provided to individuals/households. These commitments are classified by construction of dwellings, the purchase of new and established dwellings, the refinancing of existing dwellings and alterations and additions to dwellings.

02/10/2009 Impact of revised international standards on monthly International Trade in Goods and Services, Aug 2009 (ABS cat. no. 5368.0.55.014)

First issue. This information paper briefly summarises the impact of the revised international standards on key goods and services aggregates appearing in International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia (ABS cat. no. 5368.0).

14/09/2009 Internet Activity, Australia, Jun 2009 (ABS cat. no. 8153.0)

Contains details of internet activity supplied by Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in Australia. It includes information on internet subscribers and their type of connection, the type of user (business/household), the volume of data downloaded, the speed of the internet connection and the location of the subscriber (by state or territory).

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About this Release

Tasmanian Statistical News is a quarterly electronic newsletter providing information about new developments including projects, surveys, outposted ABS officers, recent statistical releases, seminars, training and reviews.

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